



**PRESS RELEASE from the  
LIBERTY JUSTICE CENTER**

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## **Residents sue to end Chicago, Cook County proof of vaccination orders**

**CHICAGO (Feb. 10, 2022)** – The national nonprofit law firm Liberty Justice Center has filed a federal lawsuit against the City of Chicago and Cook County to end their illegal and discriminatory “proof of vaccination” requirements. The city and greater Chicago area currently require anyone above the age of 5 to show proof of receiving the COVID vaccine to dine indoors, visit gyms, or enjoy entertainment venues where food or drink are being served. Liberty Justice Center is the same law firm that sued over the federal vaccine mandate for private businesses in November 2021, and was successful in securing a nationwide injunction halting its enforcement the very next day. Today’s federal lawsuit was filed on behalf of 8 residents of Chicago and Cook County.

“It has been two years since the pandemic started and the overwhelming majority of states do not have a mask requirement, let alone a proof of vaccination requirement, to participate in civic life. But rather than move toward lessening restrictions and allowing their residents to live as freely as their fellow Americans, Chicago and Cook County officials are doubling down on illegal and ineffective measures under the guise of virus containment,” said **Daniel Suhr, managing attorney at the Liberty Justice Center and lead attorney on the lawsuit.** “Americans are approaching the two-year anniversary of the first COVID lockdowns and in the rear-view mirror, are realizing the short-sightedness and ineffectiveness of many of these policies. The proof of vaccine requirements are just the latest iteration of more failed, illegal government policies. People are familiar with the virus and are more than well informed to make decisions to protect themselves. These requirements are blatantly illegal, not to mention unscientific and unnecessary.”

The federal lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Chicago and Cook County residents claim the orders violate the rights of equal protection, due process and freedom of religion provided by the U.S. Constitution, while also violating state law, the Illinois state constitution and Chicago’s own municipal code. In the coming days, attorneys will file a Motion for Preliminary Injunction to request that the proof of vaccination orders be immediately suspended.

The lawsuit comes at a time when almost the entire country does not have a mask mandate for participating in civic life or in schools, or any “proof of vaccination” requirement for soliciting private businesses. It also comes one day after Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker announced the impending end of one of the country’s few remaining statewide indoor mask mandates. Meanwhile, Americans now have a wide toolkit to protect themselves and determine their personal risk tolerance for the virus. Not only that, but hospitalization rates are also plummeting due to the natural seasonality of the virus, irrespective of these illegal and unscientific mandates.

“After nearly two years of restriction, isolation and division, it feels like life in the Chicago area is getting worse, not better,” said **Courtney Connolly, lead plaintiff in the lawsuit and Chicago resident**. “These requirements are not protecting anyone. They’re not about public health. The orders are about ostracizing and shaming people who disagree with the point of view of the government by prohibiting them from participating in life – and these government officials are so ruthless that they have imposed these mandates on residents as young as 5. That’s wrong. It must end and never be permitted again.”

The lawsuit, *Connolly v. Lightfoot*, was filed on Feb. 10, 2022, in the United State District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. A copy of the case is available here: <https://libertyjusticecenter.org/media/chicago-proof-of-vaccination>

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The Liberty Justice Center is a nonprofit, public-interest litigation center that fights to protect fundamental constitutional rights. The Liberty Justice Center is best known for its 2018 U.S. Supreme Court victory in *Janus v. AFSCME*. Learn more about the Liberty Justice Center at [LibertyJusticeCenter.org](https://LibertyJusticeCenter.org).